

Historic, Archive Document

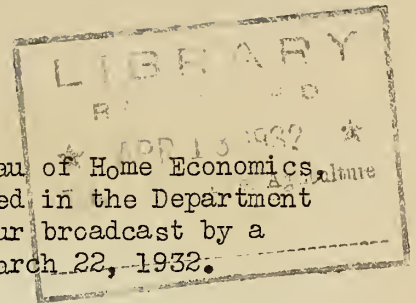
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR:

Eggs in the Diet

1.9
H755R

A radio interview between Miss Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Dr. M. A. Jull, Bureau of Animal Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour broadcast by a network of 47 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, March 22, 1932.



MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

With Easter only five days off, certainly the time has come to the Household Calendar to talk about eggs. For as spring comes on, the curve of egg production is going up, up, up. The peak generally comes along in April, with the hens of the United States laying at the rate of about 61,000 eggs a minute. Mass production all right, isn't it, and it certainly means quantity consumption on our part to keep up. As the statisticians figure it out, each of us consume about 260 eggs a year, and in the spring when eggs are at their best is the time to use them most freely.

But I must not steal Doctor Jull's thunder. As I promised you last week, Dr. M. A. Jull, of the Bureau of Animal Industry, is here today to give us consumers the latest information about the egg market, and selecting eggs for the table. You know Doctor Jull already through his Farm and Home Hour talks on poultry husbandry.

Doctor Jull, first of all, what can you tell us about egg prices? The other day a friend told me what she was paying for eggs, and it reminded me of the stories my mother used to tell about selling eggs from a Kansas farm in the early days. How about it, Doctor Jull?

DR. JULL: Yes, I am not surprised, Miss Van Deman, that present egg prices remind you of days long past. In the middle West farmers haven't been getting such low prices for their eggs for almost 50 years. Just think, the actual average price of eggs on local farm markets during February of this year was less than 13 cents per dozen. The only consolation is that feed prices are low, and poultry pays as well or better than some other branches of agriculture. Present retail prices for eggs are lower than before the war, and so today consumers are getting the best eggs at the lowest in many a year. In fact, we cannot expect to buy eggs much cheaper than we are right now. They're a bargain.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, as you say, Doctor Jull, it's pretty hard lines for the poultry farmer who has eggs to sell. But it does give the farm family a good reason for using more eggs at home, and for the city family it brings them down into the list of low-cost foods. Looked at from the standpoint of what they furnish to the diet it makes eggs mighty cheap food. Now, Doctor Jull, can you give us a few pointers on selecting eggs for quality? For instance, what do you consider, are the characteristics of a good egg?

DR. JULL: That's a good question, Miss Van Deman, because there's all the difference in the world between a good egg and a bad egg. It's easy to tell a bad egg-- sometimes without looking. But when you ask me how to tell a good egg -- that's different.

(over)

There are many good eggs on the market sold under the name of nearby hennerys, extras, specials, firsts, milk-white new laids, and other distinctive terms. These terms are sometimes confusing, but after a few tries you can tell which brand or tradename of eggs to rely on for quality. Even though at this time of the year practically all eggs are good and most of them are strictly fresh, still if you test them after you take them home you can soon learn which brand or kind of egg is the best for you to get regularly.

Break two or three eggs out of the dozen into a flat plate, and note whether the white is thick enough to stay near the yolk and stand up around it like a layer of clear, firm jelly. If the white runs all over the plate and appears very watery, the egg is poor in quality or somewhat stale.

Also notice the yolk, and see whether it stands up well or whether it is flattened out. If it lies flat, the egg is not quite so good in quality as when the yolk stands up round and firm. Also notice the odor. Any off-odor generally means off-flavor. The color of the yolk, whether it is deep or pale yellow - depends a great deal on the feed of the hens and is not often an index of quality.

The quality of an egg also shows up in cooking. It takes an egg with a good firm white to peach well. And you'll get larger, lighter sponge cakes and fluffy omelets if you make them with high quality eggs. For making custards and for scrambled eggs, there's no harm if the whites are slightly watery.

MISS VAN DEMAN: That's a very practical point, Doctor Jull, that the quality of the whites of the eggs influences the size and the texture of sponge cakes and omelets. There's more I want to ask you about eggs in cooking, but first may I put in a word about food value?

Since time immemorial eggs have been considered one of the most nourishing of foods. But it has remained for the nutrition chemists of our day to find exact reasons for this high food value, and the story is not all told yet. We do know, however, that eggs are an exceptionally good source of efficient protein, the kind of protein that the body can use most effectively in building tissues. Eggs are also unusually rich in the vitamins that promote growth and assist in the building of strong teeth and bones. One specialist in child nutrition says that one egg yolk a day in the young child's diet is a means of preventing rickets. Another food authority urges a whole egg a day for every child over two years of age on the grounds that it safeguards the formation of good red blood. Certainly, looking over our whole list of common foods, it's hard to find the equal of egg yolk as a source of iron and certain other valuable minerals.

Now to come back to eggs in cookery. Doctor Jull, what was that quotation you had the other day from a famous French chef?

DR. JULL: Oh that bit by Stacpoole do you mean? "All cookery rests on an egg. The egg is the Atlas that supports the world of gastronomy, the chef is the slave of the egg. What is the masterpiece of French cookery, the dish that outlives all other dishes, the thing that is found on His Majesty's table no less than upon the table of the bourgeoisie -- the thing that is as

French as a Frenchman and which expresses the spirit of our people as no other food could express it? --- the omelette. Could you make an omelette without breaking eggs? Then cast your mind's eye over this extraordinary Monsieur Egg and all his antics and evolutions. Now he permits himself to be boiled plain, and even like that without frills, naked and in a state of nature, he is excellent. Now he consents to appear in all ways from poached to perdu, now he is the soul of a vol-au-vent, now of a sauce; not a piecrust fit to eat but stands by virtue of my lord the egg, and should all the hens in the world commit suicide, tomorrow every chef in France worthy of the name would fall on his spit, for the egg is the cement that holds all the castle of cookery together".

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you, Doctor Jull. The next time we serve up a brown and gold omelet, we'll certainly try to make it worthy of that French chef.

Now, if any of you listening in want help on egg cookery, write to the Department of Agriculture here in Washington, and ask for the leaflet "Eggs at Any Meal". It is Leaflet 39, and contains 16 recipes for egg dishes.

Goodbye for this time. Next week Mr. Wells A. Sherman of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics will be here with me to give his advice on buying vegetables.

